

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 2, 6, 11, 12, 14-16, 18-21, 29, 31, 36, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 51, 53 and 99. Pending claims 1-3, 6-22, 24-26, 29, 31-58, 61, 62, 75, 76, 79, 80, 83, 84 and 87-99 follow.

1. (Currently Amended) A cooking apparatus for preparing a food item in a microwave oven, comprising:

a microwaveable housing having a top ~~lower~~ housing section and a bottom ~~an upper~~ housing section, each housing section defining an interior space, the top ~~upper~~ housing section being placed on top of the bottom ~~lower~~ housing section to close the microwaveable housing; and

a grill positioned within said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and suspended above a bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section, said grill defining a plurality of apertures and having a surface that includes a metalized susceptor material for grilling the food item, wherein

said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and said grill are structurally configured so that steam generated by heating a gelatinous ingredient that is not extracted from the food item being prepared and positioned on said bottom surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section below said grill passes upwardly from said interior space of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section, through said grill apertures, onto at least a bottom surface of the food item, and into said interior space of said top ~~upper~~ housing section.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a support member extending from an interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section, said grill being placed on said support member.

3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, said microwaveable housing including a vent through which steam is released.

4-5. (Canceled).

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, steam that rises from said interior space of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and through said grill apertures including a flavoring that is applied to the food item.

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, the flavoring comprising a charcoal flavoring.

8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, the flavoring comprising a beef flavoring.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, the flavoring comprising a barbeque flavoring.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, the flavoring comprising a lemon flavoring.
11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, steam that rises from said interior space of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and through said grill apertures including an aroma that is applied to the food item.
12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, steam that rises from said interior space of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and through said grill apertures including a coloring that is applied to the food item.
13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, the coloring comprising a caramel coloring.
14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, said grill being structurally configured so that a liquid from the heated food item can drain downwardly through said grill apertures to said a bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section, and steam from the heated gelatinous ingredient passes upwardly from said interior space of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section, through said grill apertures, onto the food item, and into said interior space of said top ~~upper~~ housing section.
15. (Currently Amended) A microwave cooking apparatus for preparing a food item in a microwave oven, comprising:

a microwaveable housing having a bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and a top ~~an upper~~ housing section, each housing section defining an interior space, said top ~~upper~~ housing section being placed on top of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section to close said microwaveable housing;

a support member extending from an interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section;
and

a grill positioned within said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and suspended above a bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section by said support member, said grill having a surface for grilling the food item and defining a plurality apertures, wherein

said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and said grill are structurally configured so that steam generated by heating a gelatinous ingredient that is not extracted from the food item being prepared and positioned on said bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and below said grill can pass upwardly from said interior space of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section, through said grill apertures, onto at least a bottom surface of the food item, and into said interior space of said top ~~upper~~ housing section, and liquid from the heated food item can pass downwardly from the heated

food item, through said grill apertures, and said bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section.

16. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a connector that couples said bottom and top ~~lower and upper~~ microwave housing sections together.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 16, said connector comprising a flexible connector.

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, said support members comprising a ridge extending from an interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section, said grill being placed on said ridge.

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, said support member comprising a plurality of support members, the plurality of support members comprising a plurality of base members extending upwardly from said bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section.

20. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, said top ~~upper~~ housing section defining a vent aperture through which steam is released.

21. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a vent attached to a top surface of said top ~~upper~~ housing section, said vent defining one or more apertures through which steam can be released.

22. (Original) The apparatus of claim 21, said vent being adjustable.

23. (Canceled).

24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, said grill surface being coated with a susceptor material.

25. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24, said susceptor material comprising a metalized susceptor material.

26. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 24, said susceptor material allowing said grill surface to reach a sufficiently high temperature and marks the food item with a pattern of said grill surface.

27-28. (Canceled).

29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, said bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section defining a reservoir, the gelatinous ingredient being positioned in said reservoir.

30. (Canceled).

31. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, steam that rises from said interior space of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and through said grill apertures including a flavoring that is applied to the food item.
32. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, the flavoring comprising a charcoal flavoring.
33. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, the flavoring comprising a beef flavoring.
34. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, the flavoring comprising a barbeque flavoring.
35. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, the flavoring comprising a lemon flavoring.
36. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 31, steam that rises from said interior space of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and through said grill apertures including an aroma that is applied to the food item.
37. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 31, steam that rises from said interior space of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and through said grill apertures including a coloring that is applied to the food item.
38. (Original) The apparatus of claim 37, the coloring comprising a caramel coloring.
39. (Currently Amended) A packaged food product for heating in a microwave oven, comprising:
a microwaveable housing having a bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and a top ~~an upper~~ housing section, each housing section defining an interior space, the top ~~upper~~ housing section being placed on top of the bottom ~~lower~~ housing section to close the microwaveable housing;
a support member extending from an interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section;
a food item;
a grill positioned within said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and suspended above a bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section by said support member, said grill defining a plurality apertures and having a surface for grilling said food item; and
a gelatinous ingredient for said food item, wherein said gelatinous ingredient is not extracted from said food item being prepared and is positioned on said bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and below said grill,
wherein said packaged food product is structurally configured so that when the packaged food product is heated in the microwave oven, said heated gelatinous ingredient generates steam that rises upwardly from said interior space of said bottom housing section, through said grill apertures,

onto at least a bottom surface of said heated food item, and into said interior space of said top ~~upper~~ housing section.

40. (Previously Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, said support member comprising a ridge.

41. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, said support member comprising a plurality of support members, the plurality of support members comprising base members extending upwardly from said bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section.

42. (Previously Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, further comprising a vent in one of the housing sections, said vent defining an aperture, wherein steam is released through the aperture.

43. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 42, said top ~~lower~~ housing section including said vent.

44. (Previously Amended) The packaged food product of claim 42, said vent being attached to a top of said top housing section.

45. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein liquid from said heated food item can pass downwardly from said heated food item, through said grill apertures and onto said bottom interior surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section.

46. (Original) The packaged food product of claim 39, said grill surface being coated with a metalized susceptor material.

47. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, said bottom surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section defining a reservoir, said gelatinous ingredient being positioned in said reservoir.

48. (Previously Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, further comprising an inert gas, said inert gas being added into said microwaveable housing, and said microwaveable housing being sealed with said food item, said gelatinous ingredient, said support member, said grill surface, and said inert gas therein.

49. (Original) The packaged food product of claim 39, said microwaveable housing being sealed and evacuated of air.

50. (Original) The packaged food product of claim 39, said food item being beef, chicken, pork or a vegetable.

51. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, further comprising a connector that couples said bottom and top ~~lower and upper~~ microwave housing sections together.

52. (Previously Amended) The packaged food product of claim 51, said connector comprising a flexible connector.

53. (Currently Amended) A method of preparing a food item in a microwave oven, comprising: providing a packaged food product, the packaged food producing including

a microwaveable housing having a bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and a top ~~an upper~~ housing section, each housing section defining an interior space,

a grill positioned within said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section and being suspended above a bottom surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section, the grill having a surface for grilling the food item-and defining apertures,

a food item, and

a gelatinous ingredient for the food item, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is not extracted from the food item being prepared, and the grill, the gelatinous ingredient, and the food item are contained within the microwaveable housing; and

heating the packaged food product in the microwave oven so that the food item is heated and the gelatinous ingredient is heated and at least partially liquefies or melts from a solid or semi-solid state, wherein the heated gelatinous ingredient generates steam that rises upwardly from the interior space of the bottom ~~lower~~ housing section, through the grill apertures, onto at least a bottom surface of the food item, and into the interior space of the top ~~upper~~ housing section.

54. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 53, further comprising releasing steam through a vent defined in the microwaveable housing.

55. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 53, further comprising, before providing a packaged food product, applying a metalized susceptor layer to the grill surface so that when the grill surface is sufficiently heated, the food item is marked with a pattern of the heated grill surface.

56. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 53, steam generated by heating the gelatinous ingredient including a flavoring that is applied to the food item.

57. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 53, steam generated by heating the gelatinous ingredient including a scent or an aroma that is applied to the food item.
58. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 53, steam generated by heating the gelatinous ingredient including a coloring that is applied to the food item.
- 59-60. (Canceled).
61. (Previously Amended). The packaged food product of claim 39, said gelatinous ingredient having a defined shape until being heated.
62. (Previously Amended). The method of claim 53, the gelatinous ingredient having a defined shape until being heated.
- 63-74. (Canceled).
75. (Previously Amended). The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein said gelatinous ingredient comprises a corn syrup ingredient and an agar ingredient.
76. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, providing said gelatinous ingredient comprising providing a gelatinous ingredient including a corn syrup ingredient and an agar ingredient.
- 77-78. (Canceled).
79. (Previously Presented) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is initially applied to the food item during heating in the microwave oven.
80. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is initially applied to the food item during heating in the microwave oven.
- 81-82. (Canceled).
83. (Previously Presented) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is contained within the bottom portion of the microwaveable housing prior to heating.
84. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is contained within the bottom portion of the microwaveable housing prior to heating.
- 85-86. (Canceled).
87. (Previously Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein said gelatinous ingredient is in a solid or semi-solid state when placed in said bottom housing section.
88. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 53, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is in a solid or semi-solid state when placed in the bottom housing section.

89. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 being disposable.
90. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 15 being disposable.
91. (Previously Presented) The packaged food product of claim 39 being disposable.
92. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, further comprising:
removing the heated food item from the microwaveable housing; and
discarding the remaining portions of the packaged food product.
93. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, the microwaveable housing being shaped as a rectangle, a square, a circle, or an ellipse.
94. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 15, the microwaveable housing being shaped as a rectangle, a square, a circle, or an ellipse.
95. (Previously Presented) The packaged food product of claim 39, the microwaveable housing being shaped as a rectangle, a square, a circle, or an ellipse.
96. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein providing the packaged food product comprises providing a packaged food producing including a microwaveable housing being shaped as a rectangle, a square, a circle, or an ellipse.
97. (Previously Presented) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein the food item is a fish, a beef, a poultry, a pork, a vegetable, or a soybean food item.
98. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, providing the packaged food product comprising providing a packaged food product having a fish, a beef, a poultry, a pork, a vegetable, or a soybean food item.

99. (Currently Amended) A packaged food product for heating in a microwave oven, comprising:
- a microwaveable housing having a bottom housing defining an interior space and top housing section defining an interior space, the bottom and top housing sections being joined together to close the microwaveable housing;
 - a food item;
 - a grill positioned within a the bottom ~~lower~~ housing section ~~of said microwaveable housing,~~
 - said grill defining a plurality apertures and having a surface for grilling said food item; and
 - a gelatinous ingredient for said food item, wherein
 - said gelatinous ingredient is not extracted from said food item being prepared and is positioned in said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section below said grill, and
 - said microwaveable housing and said grill are structurally configured so that steam generated by heating said gelatinous ingredient can pass upwardly from the interior space of the bottom housing section and through said grill apertures, and liquid draining from said food item can pass downwardly through said grill apertures to a surface of said bottom ~~lower~~ housing section.